

# e-Bugle

## Garrett Bugle Internet Edition

Volume 52

April 2005

No. 4



### Calendar

Fri., April 22	<i>Enchanted April</i> , Film Society, Town Hall; Italian dinner, 7:15 pm; film, 8 pm	Thurs., May 5	Jam session, Town Hall, 7 pm
Wed., Apr. 27	Citizens Assoc. meeting, Town Hall, 8 pm; Candidates Forum (see statements, pp 6, 7)	Fri., May 6	Names of graduates and youth wanting to babysit, petsit, or mow lawns due (see p 3)
Sat., Apr. 30	Constantine Seferlis memorial service, National Cathedral, 1:30 pm; Spring Fair, GPES, 10 am–3 pm Progressive dinner	Mon., May 9	Town Council Meeting, Town Hall, 8 pm
Mon., May 2	Morning coffee/tea break, Penn Place lobby; Voting, Post Office lobby, 7:30–11 am, 4–7:30 pm; Swearing-in ceremony/party, Town Hall, around 8:30 pm	Tues., May 10	Lunch Bunch, Town Hall, 12:30 pm; <i>Bugle</i> deadline, 4 pm
		Mon., May 16	GPES Book Fair, school hours
		Tues., May 17	GPES Book Fair, 8:30 am–8 pm
		Wed., May 18	GPES Book Fair, school hours
		Thurs., May 19	Jam session, Town Hall, 7 pm
		Wed., May 25	Citizens Assoc. meeting, TBD

### Town Council Meeting

My goodness, where did the time go? After a discussion about the constant yield tax increase to get our nonexistent reserves built back up, a surprise recess was held to say thank you and farewell. (This led to a late meeting.) Elin Quigley and Chris Keller were thanked for their services on the Town Council, with Chris being given a plaque for his 10 years of service. On the plaque along with the usual notations was a quotation from Thomas Fuller, which read “He who plants trees loves others besides himself.”

Once the meeting started again, the following was announced: The gas company is suppos-

edly going to fix the sinkage at Shelley Court and Oxford Street. The oversize speed hump on Montrose north is going to be taken out and replaced with one that is compliant with the law. Pictures of Garrett Park from the archival collection are going to be permanently mounted in a hall in Penn Place, and the big Garrett Park railroad sign will be put down in the PO lobby. The first Monday of the month coffee/tea break was well attended, and the next one will be on election day. The State Highway Administration insists that the Strathmore Avenue project will be completed by the 4th of July (their part of the project,

*(continued next page)*

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(continued from previous page)

that is). The rent for the use of the Town Hall by residents was raised to \$125 per usage, in order to help pay the costs to maintain the building. It was also announced that the pool parking lot is to be emptied and resurfaced in time for the start of the swimming season—thank goodness.

Starting on July 1, we will have a new waste removal contract with Montgomery County Sanitation. It seems that the renewal bid from Waste Management was just a wee bit too high, plus their service had not been up to snuff lately. This was then added to the 2006 budget, which was passed with much grumbling on the part of some Councilmembers because of the structure of the presentation (the form, not the substance). Basically the waste removal service will remain the same, but the days may change. The new company will also give us its phone number, so if a pickup is missed, you can call the company directly and not bug the Town Office.

Three of the nominees for Town Council stayed for most of the meeting, but by the time things were wrapping up, it was a pretty empty hall, with only four residents, one nominee, the reporter from the *Gazette*, and yours truly left. Why aren't more residents interested in what's going on? There was still cake and sparkling drink left over that could have been enjoyed! This reporter hopes that you will come out to the Candidates Forum and ask questions of the four nominees who are running for the three vacancies.

Mary Moyer

## GPES

All sorts of things are happening at Garrett Park Elementary! Dara Feldman (Kindergarten teacher) won the Disneyhand Award for being a creative, unique, and innovative teacher, and she and her family will get a trip to Disney World later on this year. And since Lee Derby is the principal of the school, he gets to go, too, with his family. Congratulations are in order!

At the Montgomery County Public School's Media Festival in March, the GPES Video Club won first prize in the Entertainment division for a

short video entitled "The Phantom of the School." The film tells the story of a ghost haunting Garrett Park and how a team of children help it move on to Tilden Middle School. (Does anyone besides Cathy Rinzel have any stories about there being ghosts in the school? What will come out of the woodwork when the whole school is torn down in 2012 to make way for a new building?) The Video Club sponsor is Suzanne Hickey of the Estates.

The school library asks that you bring empty ink and toner cartridges from your printers to the school office. The school is involved in a recycling program that pays \$1 for every cartridge turned in, and this in turn is used to buy more cartridges. Also, please consider checking with your employers, because the school will gladly accept their used cartridges as well. This is an easy way to support your community school and be environmentally responsible at the same time.

The Spring Fair will be on Saturday, April 30, rain or shine, from 10 am to 3 pm. (This will not conflict with the Holy Cross Flea Market or First Communion, which has happened in the past.) The fair will feature a moon bounce, giant slide, dunking booth (which teachers are volunteering is still up in the air), Armand's pizza, and over 20 games, crafts, and activities for ages 2 and up. Used toys, home baked delights, and plants will be for sale. Also, if high schoolers need community service hours, this is a fun way to earn some. They are needed on Friday, April 29, from 4 to 7 pm to help set up, and on Saturday from 9 am to 5 pm to help run the fair. Call Dawn Watkins-Chow to volunteer or with questions.

Finally, on May 16, 17, and 18, the PTA is holding a "Buy One, Get One Free" book fair: for every book purchased at full price, the next book of the same or lower price is free. On Monday and Wednesday the fair is open only during school hours, but Tuesday hours will be 8:30 am to 8 pm to allow parents and other Garrett Parkers to attend. The fair will be in the Media Center.

Mary Moyer



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The *Garrett Bugle* is a publication of the Citizens Association of Garrett Park, published 10 times a year. Publication of the *Bugle* is supported by member dues. All residents of Garrett Park are members of the Citizens Association. Yearly dues (\$10 per family or \$5 per individual per address) can be sent to Citizens Association, Box 456, Garrett Park, MD 20896.

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Out-of-town subscriptions cost \$13 (first class) or \$10 (bulk mail). Letters to the editor can be submitted by mail or hand to *Bugle* staff or by email to [bscollier@earthlink.net](mailto:bscollier@earthlink.net). The editor reserves the right to edit submissions for length and clarity. Unsigned letters will not be printed.

# Town Administrator Notes

Town elections will be held May 2, 2005. Please be sure to vote.

**Candidates for Town Council.** Three seats, each with a 2-year term, are up for election. Candidates are Tony Altar, Peter Benjamin, Fred Koomanoff, and Karol Soltan (see statements, pp 6, 7).

**Registration.** Prior registration is required. All citizen voters must be on the county's voter rolls, and noncitizens must be registered with the town.

**Absentee ballots:** There are two types of absentee ballots: The regular absentee ballots are available from the Town Office until 4 pm on April 22. After April 25, a voter who will be unable to vote because of illness or conditions of employment may apply for an emergency absentee ballot by contacting the Town Office. The Clerk must receive all absentee ballots before the polls close if they are to be counted.

**Hours of voting.** In keeping with the Town's Charter and tradition, hours of voting on Monday, May 2, will be 7:30 am to 11:30 am and 4:30 pm to 7:30 pm, in the Post Office lobby, Penn Place, 4600 Waverly Avenue.

**Election reception and swearing-in at Town Hall.** The Town Hall bell will be rung before the announcement of the election results. The evening will include a swearing-in ceremony and reception. We expect the results will be available by 8 pm, so plan to come and greet the newly elected Councilmembers.

**Election Judges.** Barbara Shidler will serve as Chief Judge, with Susan Frant and Bette Runck as Election Judges. Donn Mader will serve as alternate judge.

**Fiscal Year 2006 Budget.** At the regular April meeting, the Council adopted the FY06 budget, copies of which are available at the Town Office and posted on the town website. The FY06 budget concentrates on improving operational capabilities, something that has taken something of a back seat during recent years because of the major capital projects undertaken. These capital projects have both drawn down town reserves and left a

number of loose ends to be tidied up before new projects get started. The FY06 budget is designed to start to rebuild town reserves in a measured way, and also provides funds in the capital budget to finish up most of those loose ends. Also, the Mayor has appointed an Infrastructure Committee, which is charged with reviewing the status of the town's roads, drains, buildings, and other properties, and making recommendations to the Council regarding future capital projects.

As always, if you have questions or concerns about the budget or any other Town issue, please call the Town Office at 301-933-7488 or email us at garrett-park@comcast.net.

Ted Pratt  
Town Administrator/Clerk-Treasurer

## Summer Jobs List

We are looking for names for people who are interested in being hired during the summer to petsit, babysit, mow lawns, or garden. If anyone 13 years or older would like to be put on the list, please either email or call me and leave a name, age, phone number, and a description of what job you would like to do. If you have had any special training or certification (Red Cross, CPR, etc.), mention that also. Please try to get this information to me by May 6. We will publish this list in the June *Bugle*. This is a great way to make some cold hard cash—my 14-year-old put his name on the snow shovel list and made over \$200 this winter!

Carol Davies

## Graduates Lists

Also needed for the June *Bugle* are the names of high school or college graduates and what their plans are for next fall. Include the school graduated from, the degree earned, and any honors that you received. Either email or call me and leave the information on the phone mail. Please try to get this information to me by May 6.

Carol Davies



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# The Owls of Spring

As April toddles along in Garrett Park, Nature revs up to do her stuff. Spring’s run opened again this year with the barking of the barred owl. (Imagine a basset hound after an all-night booze-up.) A pair began making late winter appearances about three years ago. These are large birds, though not the largest to appear in town. That honor currently goes to the turkey vulture spotted in a tree out back, followed in size by the great blue heron seen early one morning perched atop our roof. Perhaps it was heading to Great Falls.

Award for the most dramatic entrance goes to the sharp-shinned hawk who fell from the sky and snatched a cardinal from the feeder—all in the blink of an eye. Less dramatic but equally unnerving was the teddy-bear-sized Cooper’s hawk last December who watched us through the back window like, well, like a hawk. Rounding out the predator list is last spring’s diminutive American kestrel—kind of a nanofalcon.

Feeders attract the usual suspects, though for a time crows and tufted titmice were notable by their absence, possibly victims of West Nile virus. Woodpeckers enjoy the feeder, and this year I’ve been able to add a hairy to the downy, red-bellied, and flicker group. It’s been more than two years since a rose-breasted grosbeak visited the feeder, though I’d settle for an evening grosbeak, supposedly more common, but which I haven’t yet been able to add to the list.

In the “What the ... ?” category, we have the alien-looking pileated woodpeckers who occasionally flit over from Porcupine Woods, a yellow-bellied sapsucker, a wood duck, and, once, 10 years ago, an eastern bluebird.

The Big Tiny Little award is a tie between the ruby-throated hummingbird, who sometimes hovers above watching me garden, and the golden-crowned kinglet, a host of which once parked themselves in our autumn olive.

Small but nonetheless annoying are the house finches that I thought were perched on the broccoli eating the insects, but were in fact perched on the broccoli eating the broccoli. Large and annoying? The northern flicker who used to drill early in the morning on our turret roof is exceeded only by the mad robin who used to hurl himself against our windows. It was a great relief when he started hurling himself against the neighbors’ windows.

Apologies to all who didn’t get a mention. If I could sort out all the finches, sparrows, and other LBJ’s (little brown jobs, as they are referred to in birding circles), the count would exceed 50.

Meanwhile, keep watching the skies!

Jonathan Paul

# Letters to the Editor

## Clean Cars Act

Last week the Maryland Clean Cars Act died in the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee. This bill would have improved public health and the environment, reduced our dependence on foreign oil and promoted the use of alternative technology. Sadly, it lost by one vote.

We were pleased to see that our Senator Jennie Forehand (Rockville and Gaithersburg Senator) voted in support of the bill. The Clean Cars Act was clearly a priority for her constituents, who organized phone banks, collected postcards at the Metro, and sent letters in support. We hope she will continue to fight for her constituents and be a co-sponsor of the bill next year.

With 150,000 Maryland children suffering from asthma, it is hard to understand why any legislator would pass up a chance to improve our air quality. We only hope they will get it right next year. Last session, the bill lost by four votes. This year, it lost by one.

With Senator Forehand’s support, I hope we will see a victory on this important bill.

Jennifer Sass

## Brick Proposal

I have been preoccupied for some time with thoughts on the purpose and design of our Brick Memorial. From what I was able to learn, the arrangement of the bricks involved creating a circular flat pavement in a setting adjacent to the Post Office.

I thought that the purpose was to memorialize and identify certain citizens who had helped the town, and at the same time (Barbara Shidler’s suggestion) to include a bow to the porcupine and his motto “Don’t tread on me.” I do not feel the current plan reflects that concept.

Perhaps the Town Council might seek suggestions for an alternative or more appropriate design, since there are no time constraints that I am aware of—the bricks will ultimately be laid to rest for eternity.

In conclusion, and out of respect for Jack Mandel’s efforts to “get the show on the road,” I have a sketch that rearranges the bricks in the same location. However, the site that I would prefer is our beloved Porcupine Woods, sacrosanct wetlands where the quiet pathway could be lined with our bricks from here to there for all time.

Donal McLaughlin

[Note: Drawings of the proposal were sent to the Mayor and Town Council.]

Visit Garrett Park’s Website:

[www.garrettpark.org/](http://www.garrettpark.org/)

## Bugle Notes . . . Sweet and Sour

- ♪ Congratulations to the Tritschler family. Daughter Elizabeth and Matthew Hillebrenner were married at Holy Cross Church on April 16. Her sister Claire was the maid of honor, and brother John a groomsman. Following a honeymoon in Seaside, Florida, they will be living in Gaithersburg. Both are working at the FDA, where they are biomedical engineers reviewing heart devices.
- ♪ On the mend list: Dave Fredericks is back home after having a mild stroke. At the time of writing, Beth Stites is in Suburban with a mild case of pneumonia. Ned Dolan is in the Navy Hospital doing rehab following a mild stroke. (He called the Town Administrator from his sick bed to express concerns about the Strathmore work!) Finally, the Weymouth Street Sign Company slowed down production for a week, so that Donal McLaughlin could get a replacement battery at Sibley Hospital for his 4-year-old pacemaker. He is now back home and ready to go with new signs. Maybe the pacemaker is why he is the town's most senior citizen at 95+ years old.
- ♪ WSSC dig: it seems most likely that the big dig for the 8-foot drain pipe will follow I-270 and I-495 to get from Tuckerman Lane to Rock Creek. It will be housed in an underground tunnel, 250 to 300 feet below the surface.
- ♪ Joyce Collier, mother of *Bugle* editor Barbara Collier, died on March 23. A memorial service was held on April 1 at Cedar Lane Unitarian Church.
- ♪ Msgr. Gotto announced that he will be retiring the first of July after serving Holy Cross parish as rector for 22 or so years. No word yet about who the parish will get to take his place. The Monseigneur will also be celebrating his 50 years as a priest in June.
- ♪ Any ideas about a theme for 4th of July? Let someone on the Citizens Association hear them.
- ♪ Josh Flaer was spotted jogging around town early in the morning after returning from his year's duty in Iraq. He is now finished with his military duties.
- ♪ Bugle advertiser "Styles & Creations" announces that every Tuesday in April and May, it will donate 10 percent of any haircut price to the Make-A-Wish foundation of the Mid-Atlantic. Something to keep in mind if you need your hair cut.

## Letter from the Mayor

At last spring seems to be here. Our maintenance crew is busy cleaning and preparing to plant around town. I have noticed that the warming weather seems to be encouraging drivers to speed, so I urge everyone to drive more slowly, watch for the people out walking and running, and enjoy the flowers and leafing trees. April is one of our loveliest months.

I have spent several days of this past month in Annapolis with Senator Jennie Forehand. She has worked hard to protect municipal funding in the state budget. We will be inviting our delegation to

come to town to give us a summary of the recent legislative session.

Over 20 people came to the first Monday Coffee/Tea Break on April 4, including three small residents and three men (proving that guys could come and live to tell about it). A good mix of people who are new to town and long-time residents spent an hour or so chatting. It was very pleasant. The next Monday Break is May 2, election day in town. Please come vote in the Post Office lobby, and then come upstairs for a "cuppa" and to meet other residents.

Carolyn Shawaker

## We're Green Again!

We're green again courtesy of someone who wishes to remain unknown. She is happy with the green spring growth in town, and wants to see us green too. So thank you, mystery donor. We will be green for all of this printing year, thanks to the generosity of our readers. However, if anyone would like to start the ball rolling for the 2005/06 printing year, feel free to send a check for \$25 (the minimum donation required) or \$37 (the actual printing cost) to Mary Moyer, Box 98, Garrett Park, or put it in my front porch mail box. Thanks in advance. And a reminder—did you pay your Citizens Association dues? Mail them in; the 4th of July is going to be upon us very soon.

Mary Moyer



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## Candidates' Statements

Town Council candidates Tony Altar, Peter Benjamin, Fred Koomanoff, and Karol Soltan provided the following statements.

### Tony Altar

2004–2005 was my first year on the Garrett Park Town Council, and it has been a productive time. I worked closely with my Council colleagues, the Town Office, residents, and Mayor Shawaker. As your Councilmember, I

- represent the council on the property Setback Advisory Committee,
- represent the Council on the newly formed Infrastructure Committee,
- revised the property renovation permitting process and fees, and
- worked to fix the excessive glare of the town's newly installed street lights.

I also took some new initiatives. Martin Trocki and I established the rapid email communication system that I promised you in 2004. This system now informs you monthly of Council activities and agendas. As a result, attendance and participation at the meetings has increased. In 2005, I plan to establish a simple email polling system that will allow you to regularly, and rapidly, tell us your views on key issues. This will help shape the planning by the newly formed Infrastructure Committee.

Mayor Shawaker has asked me to be the Town Council representative on the Infrastructure Committee. This important group will work closely with Ted Pratt, the Council, and others to make long-term plans for what needs to be done, and to make sure we have the money to pay for these projects. (I have a strong suspicion that resurfacing our worst stretches of roads will be high on the list!) I will work vigorously to accurately assess the costs for projects that are truly needed, and avoid cost overruns and projects whose rationale is less than clear.

My vision of Garrett Park retains the natural beauty and architectural diversity of our town.

I want us to thrive within the metropolitan area that we enjoy, but not to succumb to the pressures of mansionization, parking lot expansions, defoliation, and other changes that are robbing the area of its individuality. I will work to maintain the services, small-town feel, quality of life, historic character, and neighborly cohesion that exists here.

I will always put our residents first.

Thank you.

### Peter Benjamin

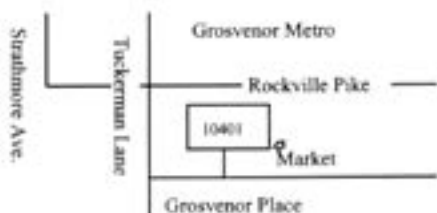
I have had the pleasure of serving the Town of Garrett Park in many ways: as a member of various citizen committees, as co-president of the Citizens Association, as Town Councilmember, and as Mayor. Our town is a very special place, and I value its colorful history and distinctive qualities. I have enjoyed being able to contribute to retaining its unique character while pursuing the changes necessary to make it an even better place for ourselves and for future residents. I believe that the rehabilitation of Penn Place, the replacement of streetlights, and the narrowing and enhancement of Strathmore Avenue are tangible examples of changes that occurred in part due to my leadership.

I like to be able to make a difference, and the scale of Garrett Park government allows me to learn the needs and desires of its citizens, to assess the potential to make improvements that will be attractive to us, and to implement those enhancements in a way the residents appreciate. A wonderful aspect of our town is the accessibility of the members of town government to all citizens, the opportunity for all to participate in decision making, the challenge of finding consensus, and the imperative of acting on that consensus. I will be retiring from my regular job in October and view this as an excellent time to devote even more energy to this town than I have had the ability to do in the past. With your support, I would like to do so as a member of the Town Council.

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Frederick Koomanoff

Lora and I with our three beautiful daughters, Vivre, Heather, and Elena, moved to Garrett Park in 1976. The uniqueness of the town and the fact that I could take the train downtown to Washington made it ideal. I have been with Battelle Memorial Institute, Planning Research Corporation, and the Department of Energy doing research in transportation, communication, and energy systems.

I am now a gentleman of leisure (retired). My love for Garrett Park, its Sears Roebuck houses, Chevy houses, and all others is one of the reasons I'm running for office, so that the people of Garrett Park can be sure that we'll still have the Post Office to meet in and Penn Place to have meetings.

I have served as the President of the Garret Park Citizens Association and would like to serve as a member of the Council. Thank you for the opportunity of running and for your votes.

Peace.

Karol Soltan

I have lived in Garrett Park since 1995; my wife grew up here, and her mother has lived down the street from our house since the early sixties. That makes Ania, our daughter, a third-generation Garrett Parker.

So I feel as though I have deep roots here. This somewhat quirky and definitely unique town

has gotten my affection. Now I would like to do something for it, by serving on the Town Council.

I teach political science at the University of Maryland in College Park. And this, together with some administrative and policy experience, gives me, I believe, the relevant background.

I will be happy to discuss specific town issues at the Candidates Forum on April 27. But as I ask you for your vote, let me tell you what matters to me the most about this town.


First, as the town changes and adapts to changes around it, we need to make sure that we don't create divisions that would undermine the extraordinary willingness of the citizens of this town to volunteer their time and skills. This is our most important resource. Second, the town's look and feel depends on the presence of trees and on the diversity of our houses. I will push hard to get more planting and to help preserve the distinctive look of the town. Third, Garrett Park is a town for walking. But I hope we can make it more so, giving each one of us more reason to leave our cars parked in front of our houses.

I look forward to meeting you at the Candidates Forum.

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